

Title: Shadows Part II

Author:

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Quite a stone there,  
Nalynn," Brisid remarked.

"An onyx. Perhaps Braldt  
gave this to me." She  
hugged the jewel to her  
chest for a second and  
then looped the chain  
over her neck. "How do I  
look?" She asked,  
gesturing to the necklace.

"Beautiful!" commented  
Riklaun. Nalynn smiled and  
peered into the hole,  
searching for more  
treasures. As she reached  
into the opening, the  
Elves heard the walls  
groaning. Dust and pebbles  
fell from the ceiling.  
Larger stones began  
falling to the floor. A  
heavy ceiling timber  
snapped, narrowly missing  
Nalynn on its descent to  
the ground.

"The building's collapsing!  
We must leave now!"  
Riklaun shouted, pushing  
Nalynn ahead of him out  
of the room. The Elves  
sprinted down the hallway  
and exited the building  
just before the upper  
floors fell into the  
ground floor. The high  
stone walls crumbled,  
disappearing into the  
growing dust cloud. The  
Elves watched at a safe  
distance as the  
once-proud structure  
crashed down into the  
basements. After many  
minutes of tumbling

stones, the dust cloud thinned, allowing the rubble to be seen.

Nalynn closed her eyes and gripped her diary tightly to her breast, thankful the building had survived long enough for the book's recovery. The three Elves walked away from the ruined building into the woods.

For a brief second, the shadow envisioned a stone building crumbling. Dust filled the air obscuring the image as the vision ended. A growl of frustration silenced the forest animals. Crumpled foliage flexed upwards as a crushing weight left them. Before the stems had fully risen, though, the leaves withered brown, dropping away to death.

Strongbow sat in his study, the redwood walls softly glowing from the sunlight streaming through the windows of the cozy room. The smell of the rosy wood always eased his mind making it an ideal place to study and read, or just relax and think. The ancient tome in front of him held his attention however, as he pored over page after page of the knowledge contained within, coming ever closer to understanding what it was he sought there. He looked up for a moment, gazing out the window at the cloudless azure sky, it was a beautiful day indeed. Reaching out, he picked up the glass of Elven wine sitting on the desk, and taking a sip, smiled at the contentment

the room always brought him. He set the glass down, and started to return to his studies when the room began to darken. The light continued to fade rapidly, and a feeling of great unease swept over him like none he had felt before.

Strongbow could barely see as he stood to go to the window--something was terribly wrong! No clouds,  
Chapter I

Rayella sat deep in thought, her pale coloration sharply offset by the shadowy jet black of her companion, Lightning. Once an ordinary wolf, Lightning was warped by magic as a pup and now was a fully sentient being trapped in a large wolf's body. The fire flickered and reflected off of the crystal cavern around them casting eerie shadows that seemed to foretell the future yet mimic the past all in one subtle motion. Both of their minds were thinking along the same track, the immense party that had been at her home today.

All of the people...  
Dearest Strongbow, Tizer, Father (Jared), Rik, and Brisid, Taelsin, Coriadae, Laerithil, and of course Nalynn. And as if Lightning had been reading her mind he lifted his head and commented.

"Ray, did you notice that Nal was acting a bit strange today?", he spoke mentally to her.

"Aye. Actually Light, I had been noticing that. I'm kind of worried."

"Riklaun said something about rediscovering her past, but I do not know what that meant. I think we should see if there is anything we can do for her."

"I was just about to suggest that."

"I wonder what it's like to figure out what you really are" his voice trailed off into that well worn path of thought: the path of not knowing what he was nor what he had been.

"Light.. you okay?"

Yeah, I'm fine...," the wolf said rather brusquely with a scowl on his lupine face. "It's nothing."

"Let's go to Brisid's to see if we can run into Nal there, alright?" Lightning agreed and the pair moved out of the lair--the Elf of light and the once-wolf of shadow: a striking team in search of a friend.

Nalynn sat in her darkened room, lighted candles glowing warmly. She had re-read the diary several times, basking in the now-remembered memories of a time gone by, before she was an Elf. Though her husband was long dead, it was a comfort to her to have this precious chronicle. She placed the diary in a silk-lined mithril box and gently lowered it into the

chest at the foot of the bed.

Returning to the small table, she examined the onyx necklace which had also been secreted away in the recesses of that ancient wall. It was a beautiful thing, though heavy - all that gold, no doubt. She took it and placed it in her jewelry box. To wear it in concert with the strand of emeralds Jared Syn had given her would be, well, just too showy.

She closed the lid, then re-opening it, took it out again. She placed it around her neck. As she studied her image in the mirror, she gently tucked the necklace inside her bodice. "So much the better," she said.

Blowing out the candles, she lay down on the bed, gazing at the stars in the night sky, until slumber overtook her.

A blood curdling scream broke the silence of the night. Nalynn bolted upright in her bed. She looked around in the darkened room and saw nothing. "Me'sambe" she said as light slowly filled the room. Nalynn quickly dressed and went outside. The drowsy Elf hurried down the streets of Floodblest to see what had happened. She saw Riklaun, Brisid and several other Elves standing near the guest quarters. She hurried over to them.

"What's going on?" Nal inquired. Riklaun, along with Tizer and Thranduil went inside the building.

Nalynn started to enter the building, but Brisid stopped her.

"You do not want to go in there."

"Why? What's wrong?"

She asked. Before Brisid could answer, Tizer came bursting out of the building clutching his gut. He did not get far when he started heaving. The door remained open and Nal caught a glimpse of inside. She gasped and turned away from the sight. She grabbed hold of Brisid tightly in a hug. "Gods, what happened in there?"

"We do not know. Edan found it when he came back. It was his brother in there." Brisid said.